

MAINTAINING NEIGHBORHOODS INSPECTION PROGRAM PRESERVES HOME VALUES



M AINTAINING DESIRABLE neighborhoods is important. It protects property values, creates a sense of community and secures future economic vitality. An emphasis on maintenance is especially important during an economic downturn when foreclosures are increasing.

The City recognizes that during difficult economic times it may not be easy for property owners to maintain their homes, but it is vital for our neighborhoods that properties do not fall into disrepair. The nuisance program is one way the City helps to maintain desirable neighborhoods. Systematic inspections by Bloomington Environmental Health employees are the primary way violations are discovered, but resident complaints are an important backup mechanism. Environmental Health investigates nearly 200 resident complaints each month, responding to reports of code violations such as tall grass or weeds, abandoned vehicles,

items stored in yards, garbage and deteriorated home exteriors. Environmental Health started its citywide inspections for tall grass and weeds in May, issuing nearly 430 orders for correction to residential and commercial properties. Inspectors were also looking for brush piles and items left behind from the Curbside Cleanup. In addition, inspectors evaluate properties that have had a foreclosure sale in the last 12 months or are known to be vacant.

More than 95 percent of all residential violations are corrected by the property owner as soon as they receive a verbal or written notice. Inspectors take time to explain the City's code requirements and the reasons behind them. This results in a high percentage of voluntary compliance and a small percentage of violations that require further enforcement.

The City relies on residents to help maintain desirable neighborhoods. Talk

to your neighbor or block captain if you see an issue in your neighborhood. Helping your neighbor recognize the problem and take corrective action before it gets out of hand is a more effective way to build community relationships than by calling in a complaint.

When backyard diplomacy does not work, call or e-mail Environmental Health at 952-563-8934 or envhealth@ci.bloomington.mn.us. Give the inspector time to observe the violation and work with the property owner to resolve the issue. Even though inspectors are able to investigate most complaints within two days of your call, it may take much longer for the property owner to correct the violation. The City must allow property owners a reasonable amount of time to correct the violation before taking corrective action.

For more information, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Environmental Health.

CLEARING THE CONGESTION FINDING NEW WAYS TO WORK

TRAFFIC BACKUPS, congested highways, pollution, crashes, construction – sound like your typical morning commute? If it does, efforts are underway to encourage commuting alternatives. The City, in conjunction with 494 Commuter Services, is developing a Travel Demand Management (TDM) program and ordinance aimed at reducing single-occupant vehicle travel during peak commute times. The program aims to increase the efficiency of Bloomington's transportation system through the promotion and facilitation of alternative modes of travel such as ridesharing, vanpooling, transit, bicycling and walking.

TDM also promotes alternative work schedules and telecommuting, which can shift and reduce demand on Bloomington's transportation system during peak traffic hours. The focus of the TDM program will be on development that generates significant traffic during weekday morning and afternoon commutes. Developers of such projects (typically offices) will be required to prepare TDM plans that identify efforts they will make to encourage employees to use alternative modes of travel to get to work.

For more information, call City Planner Julie Farnham at 952-563-4739.

BUCKLE UP! NEW SEAT BELT LAW IN EFFECT

MINNESOTA recently became the 29th state to make its seat belt law a primary offense. This means that a police officer may stop and ticket a driver or passenger for no other reason than for not wearing their seat belt. Why is this new law so important? Each year in Minnesota, more than 200 unbelted motorists are killed and another 400 unbelted motorists suffer life-altering injuries.

According to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, although 87 percent of Minnesotans buckle up while in their cars, half of all motorist traffic deaths involve unbuckled drivers.

This new law may only target the 13 percent of motorists who do not wear seat belts, but everyone is affected when friends or family members are killed or injured in a crash. Encourage everyone in your life to always wear their seat belts.

For more information, contact the Bloomington Police Department at 952-563-4900.



TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



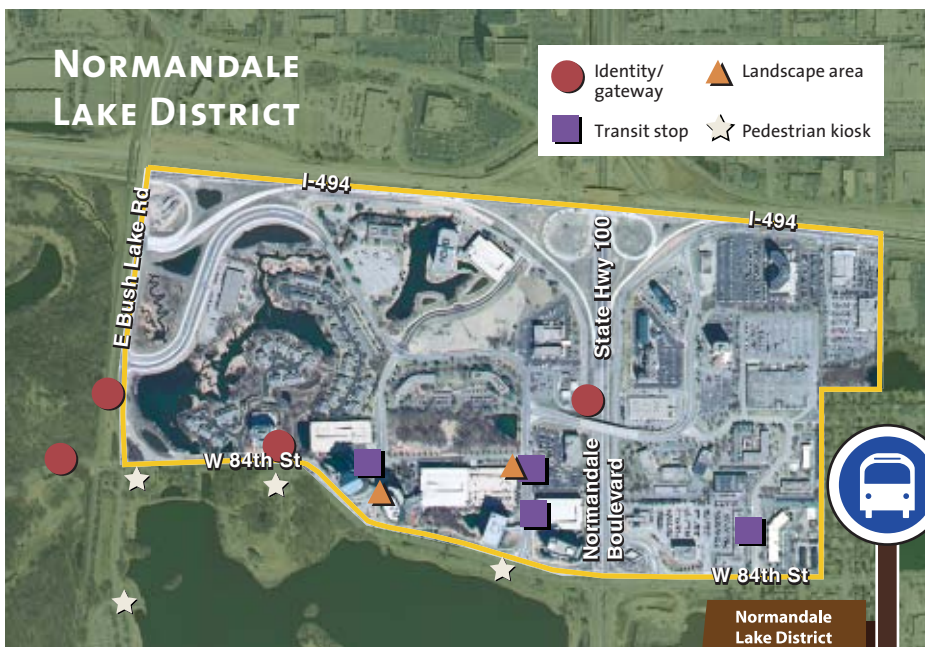
ROAD CONSTRUCTION IMPROVEMENTS MEAN SAFER ROADWAYS

THE CURRENT CONSTRUCTION projects on 90th Street and Nicollet Avenue, West 84th Street and the 106th Street bridge, will be completed by the end of August 2009. However, pavement reconstruction, as part of the City's Pavement Management Plan, is scheduled to occur on West 84th Street and the intersection of 90th Street and Nicollet Avenue in the fall. Landscape restoration to these areas, if not also completed in the fall, will be finished in the spring.

The City appreciates residents' patience and willingness to use alternative routes as these important infrastructure safety improvements are made.

For more information on these and other projects, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: road construction, or call Engineering at 952-563-4870.

Sign up for *E-Subscribe* bulletins to receive up-to-date information on road closures via e-mail at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.



DESTINATION: NORMANDALE LAKE NEW SIGNS WILL HELP VISITORS NAVIGATE

ONE OF THE ENHANCEMENTS to the Normandale Lake District will be a new sign system. District entrance signs, pedestrian information kiosks and transit stop signs will be installed this fall.

The Normandale Lake District includes the area bounded by West 84th Street on the south, Stanley Road on the east, I-494 on the north and East Bush Lake Road on the west. The district is a highly attractive employment center. The new signs will also help people recognize the district as a distinctive neighborhood, by unifying the streetscape to enhance the district's character.

The improvements will be funded by special assessments paid by office owners and tax abatements. For more information, call Development Coordinator Jennifer Desrude at 952-563-4862.



New district entrance signs, pedestrian information kiosks and transit stop signs will help visitors better navigate the area and find their destinations.